

UNCLE SAM IN SOUTH AFRICA

A BIG MARKET WHICH COULD BE SUPPLIED WITH AMERICAN GOODS.

Special Correspondence.

STEAMSHIP SAXON, Union Castled Line, En Route Cape Town to Southampton.—The United States Congress has recently refused to subsidize a steamship line from New York to Cape Town, and Uncle Sam seems asleep to the possibilities of South African trade. During the past 10 months I have been traveling through the various colonies. The people are alive to the value of American goods. A big wedge has already been inserted, and a few sledge-hammer blows will split our way into this part of the continent.

Few people realize the enormous wealth which is bottled up in the Transvaal and Cape Colony. This steamship on which I am going from Cape Town to England is one of 12,000 tons, and it belongs to a fleet of 20 or more. There are several large German lines which send regular steamers around Africa, and there are many vessels from Scotland and England, which ply regularly up and down the east and west coasts.

The Saxon is one of the fast mail ships and it is now loaded with treasures. Down in its vaults there are packages of rough diamonds, worth \$5,000,000, and great yellow gold bricks whose value is \$25,000,000 and more. In the hold there are ostrich feathers marked for London worth over \$1,000,000, and we have in addition a cargo of sheep's wool, Angora mohair and great bales of cowskins and goatskins.

SOUTH AFRICAN BIG TRADE.

But this is only one ship and others are leaving every few days. The exports of South Africa are now running at something like \$375,000,000 a year, and the imports are over \$250,000,000, making a total carrying trade of more than \$625,000,000. All of this goes in European vessels, and the greater part of the freight is paid to the Germans and British. The goods are sent to Europe, and many are then trans-shipped to the United States. We are the best customers for the diamonds and the ostrich feathers, and many of the skins find their way to our tanneries.

AN AMERICAN BANK NEEDED.

We should have steamships and banks of our own through which to do our business without paying toll to London. As it is now the banks of South Africa are operated with British capital, and they are all yielding big dividends. The Standard Bank of South Africa pays 10 per cent and the Natal bank made a clear profit of \$500,000 last year on a capital of \$2,500,000. About the lowest interest in Johannesburg is 8 per cent, and one-eighth of 1 per cent and more is charged on remittances abroad. There are several thousand American citizens living and doing business in South Africa, and an American bank of Johannesburg with \$5,000,000 capital ought to be able to pay a dividend the first year.

OUR TRADE WITH SOUTH AFRICA.

I believe that our trade with South Africa could be greatly increased. At the time of the war it ran up as high as \$38,000,000 per annum, and is now something like \$18,000,000 more. In 1906 it was almost \$20,000,000 and there is a prospect of a considerable increase. The country is now having hard times, but there are signs of improvement, and at present the various colonies are purchasing \$250,000,000 worth of foreign goods every year. The Transvaal is taking almost \$90,000,000, Natal buys \$45,000,000, Orange River colonies \$18,000,000 and Cape Colony \$90,000,000 and more.

American goods are popular in South Africa. Our foodstuffs are found everywhere. I saw California fruit, Alaska salmon and Ohio oatmeal on sale in Salisbury, Rhodesia. I ate Chicago canned beef at Victoria Falls on the Zambesi, and rode in an American buggy about Kimberley.

During my stay at the diamond mines Mr. Alpheus Williams, the manager of the De Beers syndicate, showed me a telegram stating that 150 brood mares

and four asses had just been shipped to him from the United States. He says the American mule is largely used in South Africa, and that he has now about 2,000 of them, which came from Missouri, employed in the mines. American mules are used in Johannesburg. I saw them in Zambesi, and they are gradually tramping their way into Rhodesia. A great many were brought here at the time of the war, and they proved so good that more are wanted. Mr. Williams expects to breed mules on the diamond company farms near Kimberley. His asses, by the time they arrive at Cape Town, will cost him \$1,000 apiece, and the 50 brood mares will cost altogether about \$40,000.

AMERICAN MACHINERY.

I find American machinery used in nearly all the South African mines. Baldwin-Westinghouse electric locomotives drag the blue ground containing the diamonds out of the great pipes at Kimberley, and American pumps keep the mines dry. While walking through the works one of the American managers showed me an engine used for pumping which had a geared wheel 30 feet in diameter.

"That engine," said he, "has the biggest wheel of the kind in the world. It was designed by a well known American engineer named Seymour, when he was in Africa, and the plans and specifications were sent to Simpson & Co., the celebrated engine builders of England. They thought the job too big for them, and we then forwarded the plans to Frager & Chambers of the United States. They made the wheel for us, and it works like a charm."

In the Transvaal gold mines a great part of the machinery comes from the United States. The Rand has about 15,000,000 worth of new engines, drills and other machines in 1905, and a great deal of it was sent from New York to South Africa. All of the diamond drills used are made in America. No mine is started until the ground has been tested by a "bore-hole" drilled through a thousand feet or more of rock. This drilling is done with a disk studded with rough diamonds which cuts its way downward with a rotary motion, carrying the core in its interior. The drill is raised from time to time and the core is examined for indications of gold. So far there are no British drills at work on the Rand, and these drills, which each cost from \$5,000 to \$25,000, are all bought from us.

It used to be that we sold great quantities of rifles, and many of the rifles to the miners. This market has been largely captured by Sheffield and Birmingham, as has also that of the compressed air drills used to make holes in the hard rock.

RAILROAD MATERIALS.

Within the next few years there promises to be a big opening here for railroad materials. New lines have been projected and are building in many parts of the continent. The Cape to Cairo road, which has already been extended to more than 2,000 miles north of Cape Town, is now to be pushed on to the copper mines of the Belgian Congo and another branch will soon be built to Lake Tanganyika. The Lobito Bay road which is building from Angola, on the Atlantic, to the Congo Free State, will be about 1,200 miles long, and so far only about 200 miles of it have been completed. There is a new road building in Nyassaland, and the Germans are extending their trunk line from Dar es Salaam toward Lake Tanganyika.

Bridges are needed for all these roads and the United States ought to furnish them. During my stay in Uganda I went over the 27 big viaducts which we shipped there and put up. They are as solid as when they were built, and American railroad material and bridges have thereby acquired a good reputation. In the Sudan I saw Baldwin locomotives carrying the traffic on the new road from the Red sea to the Sudan, and there are some American cars in use in South Africa. The prejudice is strongly in favor of English-built locomotives, but the quickness with

The Foreign Trade Over Six Hundred Millions—American Machinery In the Gold and Diamond Mines—Demand for Bicycles and Automobiles—New Electrical Lines and Their Possibilities—American Meats and How They are Slandered—Forty Million Dollars for Foodstuffs.



Photographed for the "News" by Frank G. Carpenter.
A GROWING MARKET FOR AMERICAN FOODSTUFFS.

which supplies can be furnished from the United States is a great point in favor of American orders. As to lumber for the roads in the way of ties, etc., much of that is now shipped from the United States. In and about the Kimberley mines there are 150 miles of track laid with American rails and the ties are of California redwood and exported from San Francisco. A great deal of Oregon pine comes to South Africa, and all the water used in Cape Town flows through pipes made in the United States.

UNCLE SAM ON THE FARMS.

I find Uncle Sam in evidence on the African farms. His agricultural implements are in use from the Zambesi to Cape Agulhas, and his farm wagons are to be seen on the highlands of the British East Africa and Uganda. The first wagons were brought into that region from Wisconsin by an American millionaire name McMillan, who had a 20,000-acre ranch near Nairobi. They worked so well that other planters have imported them and they are now the most common wagon of that part of the world.

In Rhodesia many Illinois plows are used, and in Cape Colony I saw our threshing machines and mowers and reapers. The Canadians are competing with us as to harvesting machinery, and small farm tools are being now shipped to South Africa from England and Germany.

The American windmill is in use almost everywhere. The most of southern Africa is high and dry, and pumps are needed for irrigation and other things. Many of the mills come from Chicago, but some are from Indiana and elsewhere.

Cape Colony is rapidly becoming a fruit-growing country, and it needs machinery for spraying and handling its crops. Some of the orchards are large enough to have narrow-gauge electric lines in them, and on many the fruit is moved to the stations by means of cars drawn by mules.

BICYCLES AND AUTOMOBILES.

South Africa is a land of the bicycle, and it is fast becoming a land of automobiles. Every town of Rhodesia and central Africa which I have visited has its bicycle riders. I saw women on

bicycles in Kampala, above Victoria Nyanza; the government clerks use them in Nairobi, and they are to be seen everywhere in and about Zanzibar and Dar es Salaam. There are 3,000 bicycles in Kimberley and several times that number in Johannesburg. Many of the machines are American. They sell for about the same price as in the United States, with the freight and duty added.

As to automobiles there are quite a number in Bulawayo, Kimberley, Johannesburg, Durban, Cape Town and Port Elizabeth. The French have imported them into Madagascar and you can get public automobiles there to take you over the new roads which have been cut through into the interior. There is a great demand for them in and about Johannesburg. The gold mines run for about 60 miles east and west of that city, and the managers need cars to give quick access to the various properties. Among the machines used are some from England, Germany, France and Italy, and a very few from the United States.

The most common automobile is a runabout suitable for climbing heavy hills. The roads are rough, but few high-speed cars are used. The prices average something like \$2,000, ranging from \$1,500 upward. I am told that there are about 800 cars in and about Johannesburg, and that something like a million dollars' worth of automobiles are operated in the city alone. There are over 200 cars in Cape Town. The governor of Cape Colony owns a White steamer and several light makes of American cars are well known. There are many English and French machines in use. I found a public garage at Bulawayo, which was equipped with French vehicles, and during my tour through Algeria was able to hire such automobiles for all sorts of excursions. The average price per day offered was \$25, but I found that the rate could be greatly reduced by judicious bargaining.

AMERICAN ELECTRICAL GOODS WANTED.

One of the big demands here in the near future is to be in electrical machinery. The Zambesi Falls, with its 35,000,000 horsepower, is to be utilized,

and the London syndicate formed to take the power to the Rand has floated enough stock to begin work. Within a short time there will be 630 miles of aluminum cable as big as your wrist running from the Zambesi river to Johannesburg, and all the gold mines will be using the power. This means electrical cars underground and all sorts of electrical attachment. If the line is successful the power will be sent out to the different parts of South Africa within the above radius, and the electrical market will be enormous. At present our trade in such goods is increasing. There are now electric tramways in many of the cities of Algeria and Egypt, and an extensive system is about to be put into Khartoum. Pretoria wants electric car lines, and it intends to lay 15 miles of track in the town and its suburbs. In Johannesburg there is a good street car system operated by electricity, and the same is true of Cape Town. Nearly all the deep gold mines have electric machinery for raising the ore, and there are electrical elevators in the big business buildings of Johannesburg. American goods of this kind are considered the best, and our leading American firms have their agents on the ground looking up the trade.

\$40,000,000 FOR FOODSTUFFS.

South Africa is generally considered an agricultural country. There are millions of acres in Rhodesia, the Transvaal and Cape Colony which will raise hogs and hominy, but so far the country does not begin to feed itself. In 1906 more than \$40,000,000 worth of foodstuffs were imported, and this included more than \$1,000,000 worth of hams, about \$3,000,000 worth of butter and more than \$2,000,000 worth of condensed milk. The most of the meat still comes from the United States, although our packing-house products were greatly injured by the lying book known as "The Jungle" and the wide publication which our government gave of the packing-house investigations.

During my first stay in British Central Africa I stopped with the manager of one of the mines there. As we sat at dinner one night a dish of Chicago canned beef, cooked in a stew, was brought in. As it was served the

"Jungle" was referred to and I was asked whether the stories in it were true. I replied they were not, whereupon a Britisher at the table answered: "I don't know, I can see that the dish of canned beef is all right, but the cook tells me he found a man's thumb in the one he opened up yesterday."

This man afterward said he was jag-

ing, and he spoke very highly of American meats, saying that the men in the wilds of Africa could not get along without them. Everywhere I go, however, I meet with slurs on our packing-house products, notwithstanding that the men who do the slurring are, the while, eating these meats with great gusto.

FRANK G. CARPENTER.

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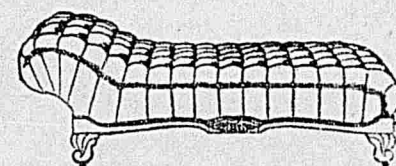


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